



Teruo Hara Ceramics
The Corcoran Gallery of Art
May 26 to July 28, 1968

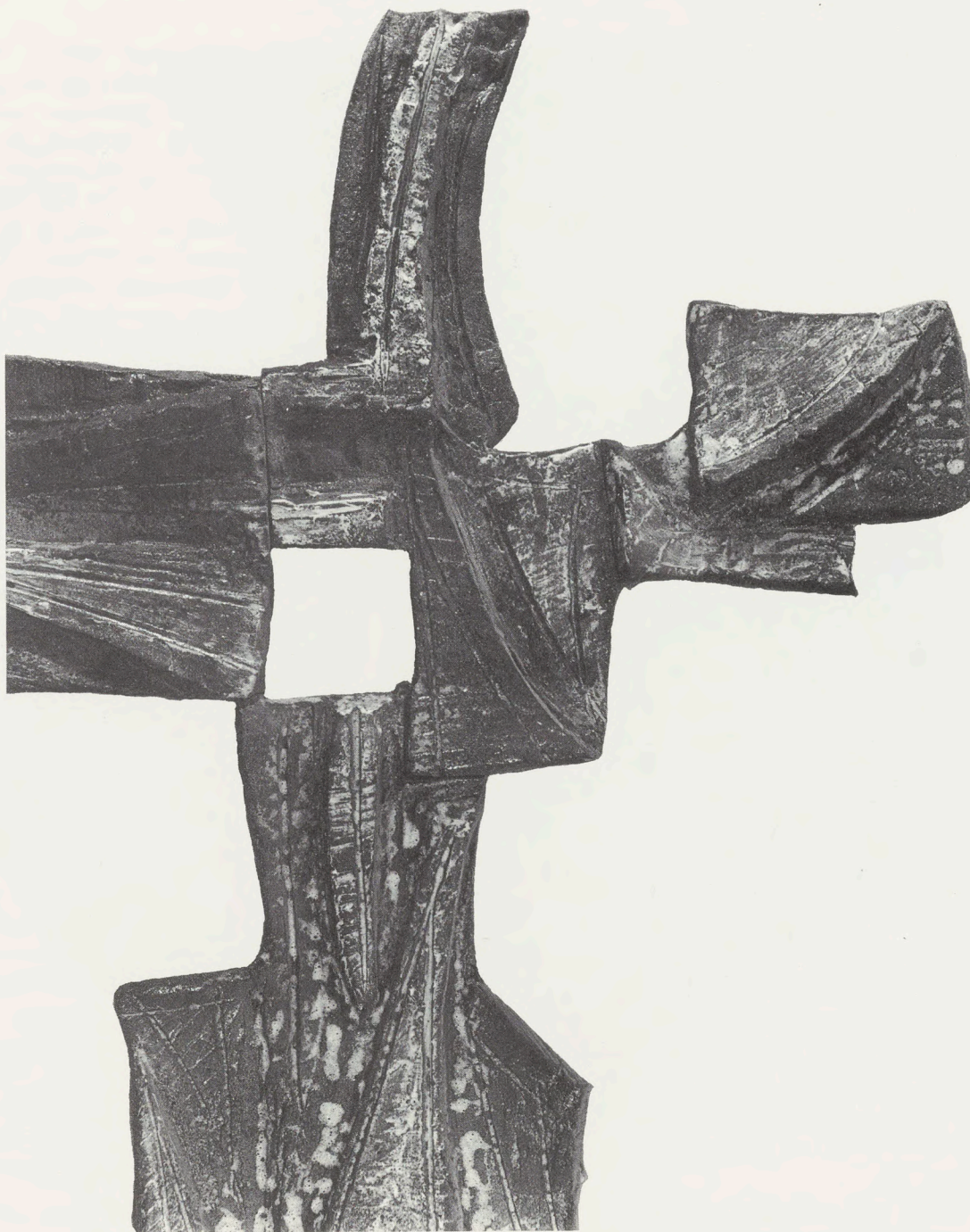
Acknowledgements

It is with great pleasure we present a one-man exhibition of the fine ceramics of Teruo Hara. This occasion marks twenty years of his work as a potter, his fortieth birthday and the completion of five years as a member of the faculty of The Corcoran School of Art.

I wish to thank Mr. and Mrs. Carl M. Freeman, The Honorable and Mrs. William Roth, Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Rosen, Mrs. Lisa Suter, Mr. Angelos Demetrion and Mr. Lester Collins for lending works to the exhibition. Special appreciation is due to the artist for his cooperation and assistance with the catalogue. Rosemary Jones of the Curatorial Staff was responsible for the organization and installation of the exhibition.

HERMANN WARNER WILLIAMS, JR.
Director

Front cover: Bowl, ash glaze, wood fire, 14" diameter, 1967.



Detail of mural, 1963.



Eight sided pot, black, green and grey glaze, 13" height, 1966.

Introduction

In the United States before World War II the utility of ceramics overshadowed aesthetic considerations relegating the potters art to a minor position. This western dualism between function and design has never existed in Japan where art is philosophically inseparable from any human activity. But in the West, it was only in the late 1940's in a world rapidly becoming more mechanized and innundated with mass produced goods that the hand-crafted pot surpassed function and took on its own value.

For centuries in Japan beautifully hand-crafted ceramics had been integral in the tea ceremony and flower arrangement, but the vocabulary of forms had become ritualized so that there was little opportunity for an artist to supersede the traditional with new ideas.

Teruo Hara was one of a generation of young artists who challenged these traditional forms. After a liberal arts education Hara first practiced industrial design and architecture before becoming interested in ceramics. He was a member of the Crafts Group of Japan, comprised of industrial designers, artists, architects and critics who sought to find a new standard of expression. In this milieu Hara became a master of his craft while he explored new design concepts. By 1958 he began to feel that his real opportunity lay in America. Earlier, he had been criticized in Japan for his innovation and he sought greater freedom. Under the auspices of the Fine Arts Committee and the American Craftsmens Council, he came to tour the United States and work with American potters. He was particularly excited by the freedom with which such West Coast potters as Peter Voulkos and Paul Soldner worked, but he felt on the other hand that there was too great an importance placed on experiment and originality for its own sake at the expense of quality.

Hara is unique in having worked ten years in Japan and ten in the United States. He is able to draw freely from both traditions. Shortly after he arrived in this country, he had a one-man show in New York, but even though this was well received, he realized he lacked knowledge of the ceramic materials and technology available in the United States—that he needed time for study. He went to work for Design Technics in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania developing clay bodies, glazes, kilns, and designing wall plaques for architectural use. This was also a period of adjusting to the language and customs of his new country.

By 1963, he felt ready for another New York exhibition, and once again was received with acclaim. He was described as "Creating compositions which combine the understatement of Oriental concepts with the vigor and excitement of the best in U.S. ceramics . . . Teruo Hara emerges here as one of the most interesting potters on the East Coast."* His own outlook was summed up in his statement:

The craftsman in the United States today faces a happy future, for Americans are recognizing more and more the value of hand craftsmanship in our increasingly mechanized world. There exists in this country freedom to see and evaluate the work and trends of all nations and to incorporate its vigor and freshness. The craftsman is no longer confined to mere repetition of colloquial traditional forms. With this freedom and inspiration, the craftsman must develop a new tradition—and to do so he must be willing to draw from painting, sculpture, and architecture.

Having learned the mechanics of American ceramics and having reveled in the great freedom in this field, Hara was able to begin to reassess the traditional oriental pots. He moved to Warrenton, Virginia, and living in relative isolation spent a great deal of time studying classic pots, becoming more aware of the values he had rejected in his youth. He began to once again sense the beauty in the simple wheel-thrown and hand-built forms and realized

that violent expression was contrary to his basically poetic sensibility. His work became simpler, characterized by a sculptural quality in which volume and movement were unified. He returned to the use of ancient glazes of copper red, celadon, temmoku and ash. As a mature artist, he was able to handle the means he had largely rejected as a youth, but now he was fully competent to evaluate the early techniques and traditions and to select what was pertinent for his own aesthetic expression. Although he returned to classic forms, his pots retained a spontaneity, individual flavor and freshness. He echoed, but did not imitate, the achievements of his artistic ancestry.

The artist's most recent works are wheel-thrown, simple and quiet in form. A plate is never perfectly round for it must have its own individual life—bottles are never symmetrical but contain subtle movement. The highly refined glazes are applied to enhance the forms, to fit the need of the shape and to create a sensuous immediacy.

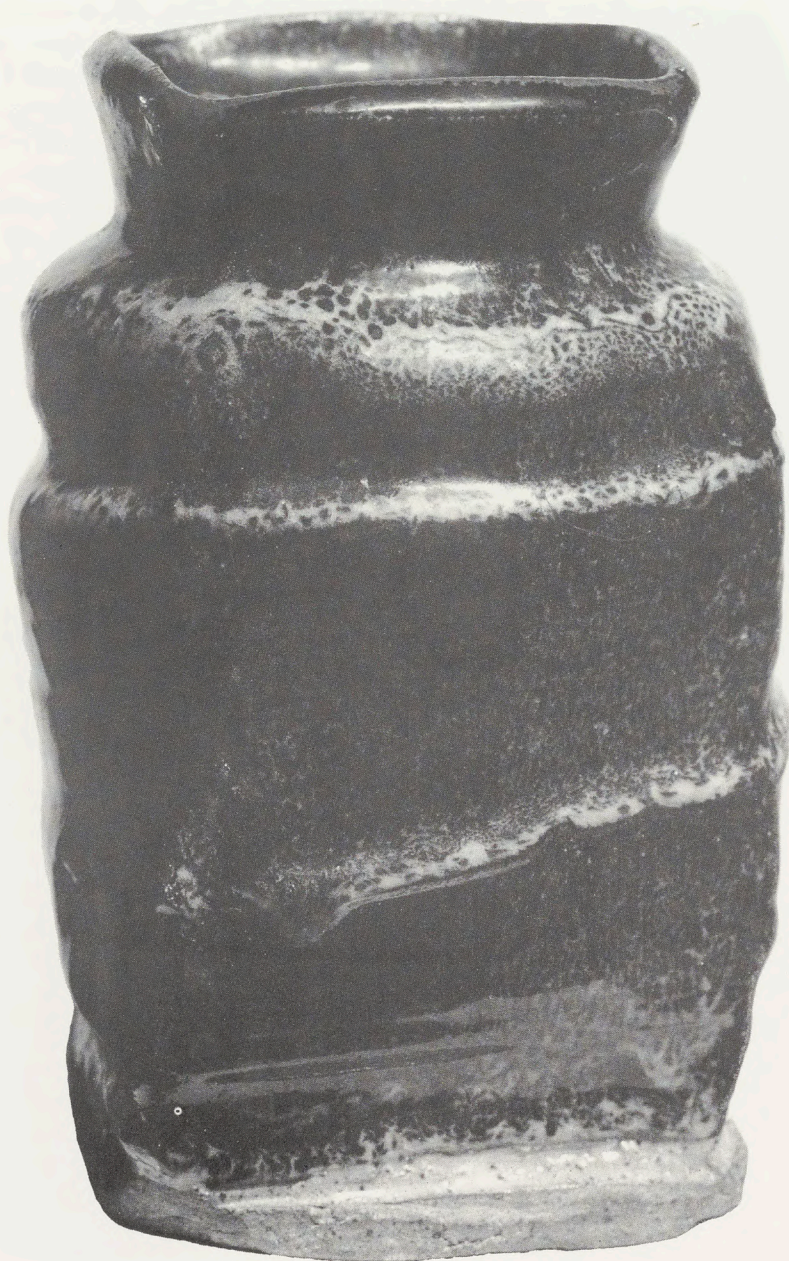
He recognizes that he faces the danger of becoming trapped in this strict and limited world of beauty. Even though he feels his current work brings a unity to his life, having come full circle after twenty years, he is ready to once again review his position to "see if there is anything he has missed."

One hopes that he will continue making his quietly beautiful pots; in a complex world where messages are shouted, their simplicity speaks softly but eloquently for this twentieth century artist who has distilled his own aesthetic by means of a return to the classic.

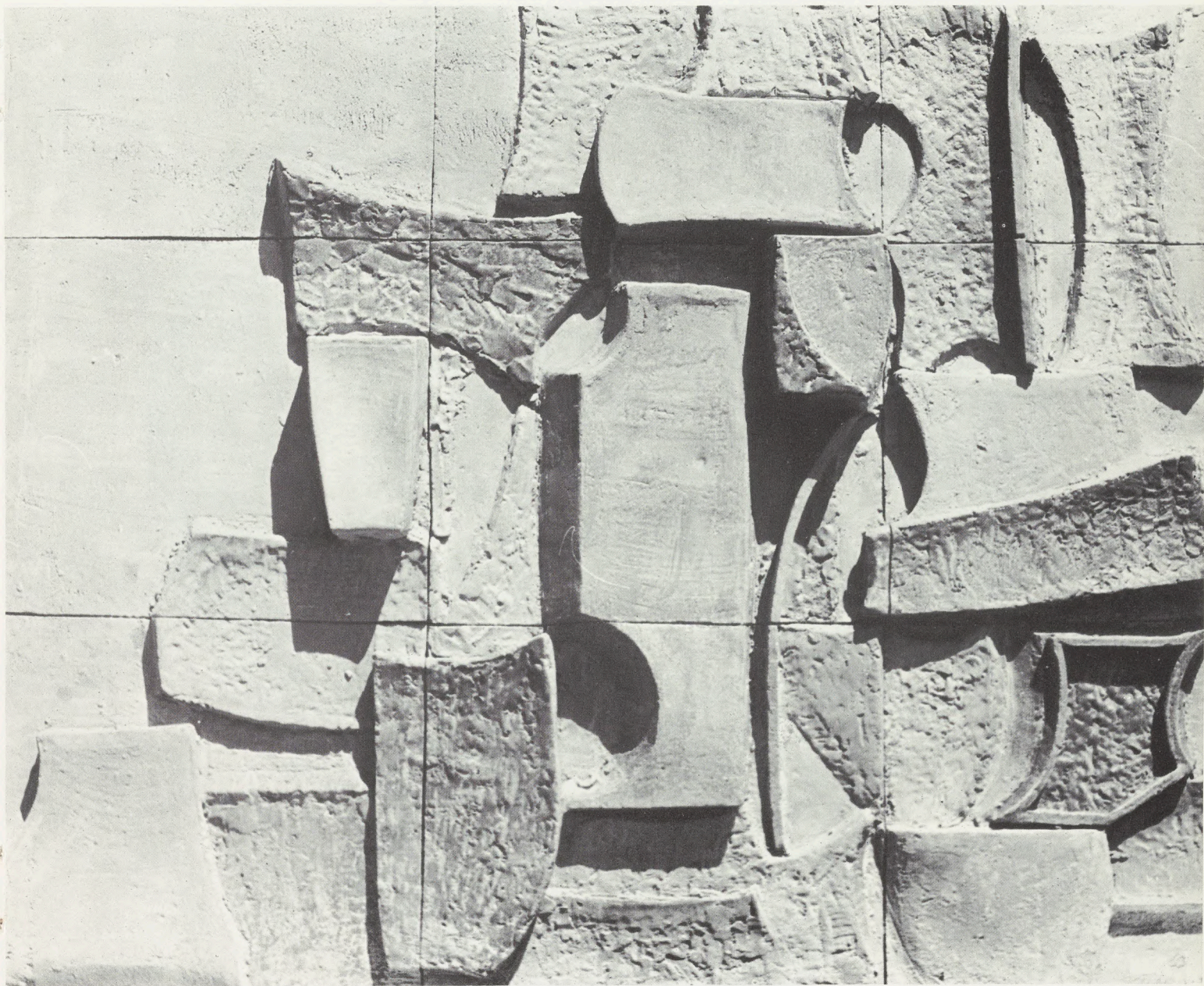
* *Craft Horizons*, November-December, 1962.



Pots, black glaze, 12" height, 1967.



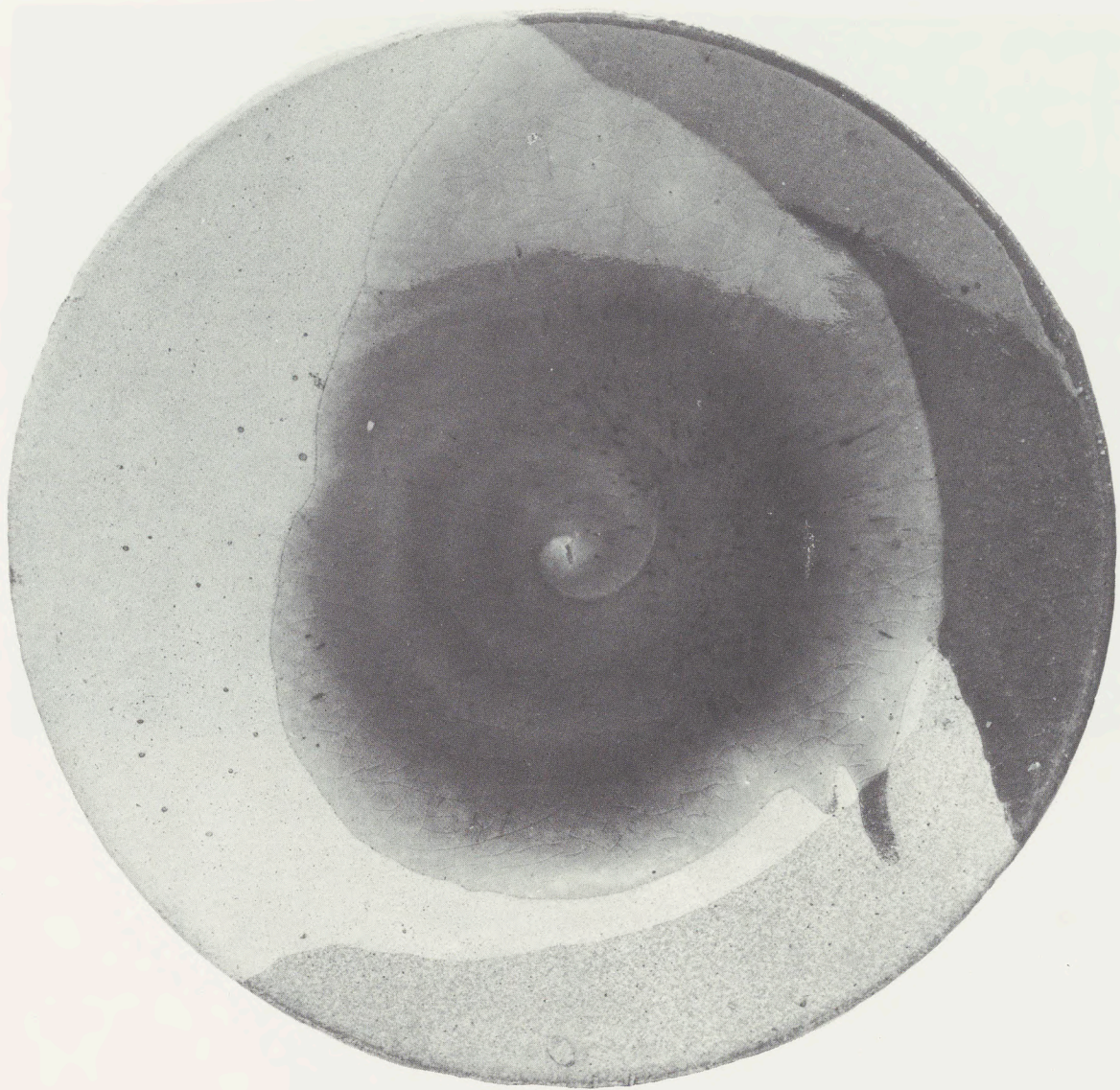
Square bottle, black and white glaze, 8" height, 1967.



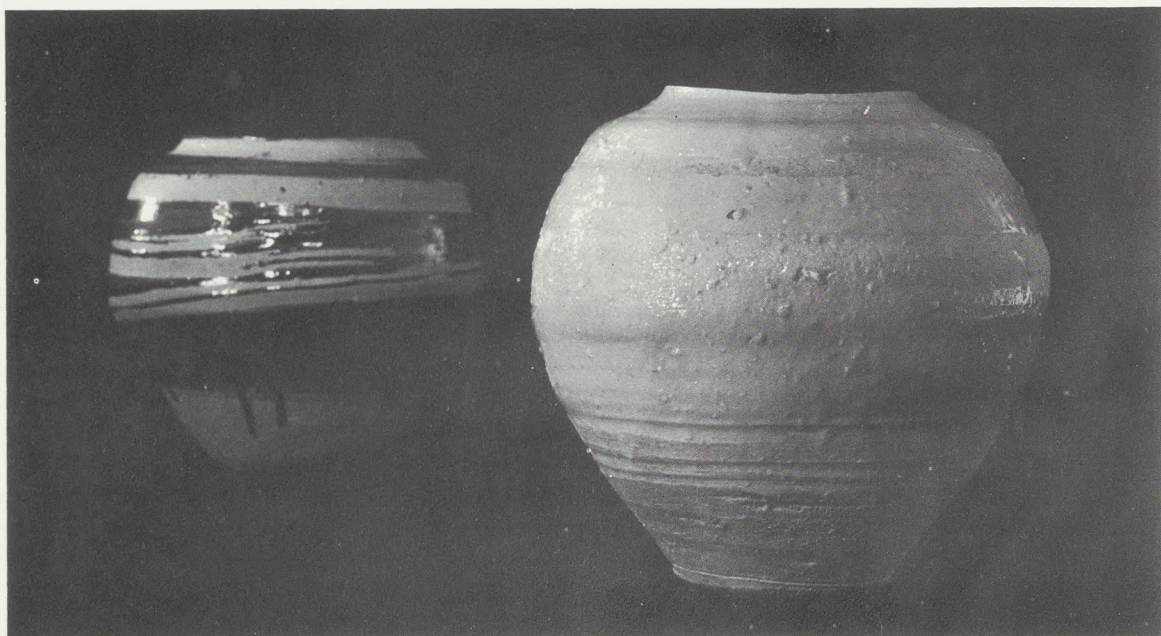
Mural, Farm Run, 108" x 96", 1963.



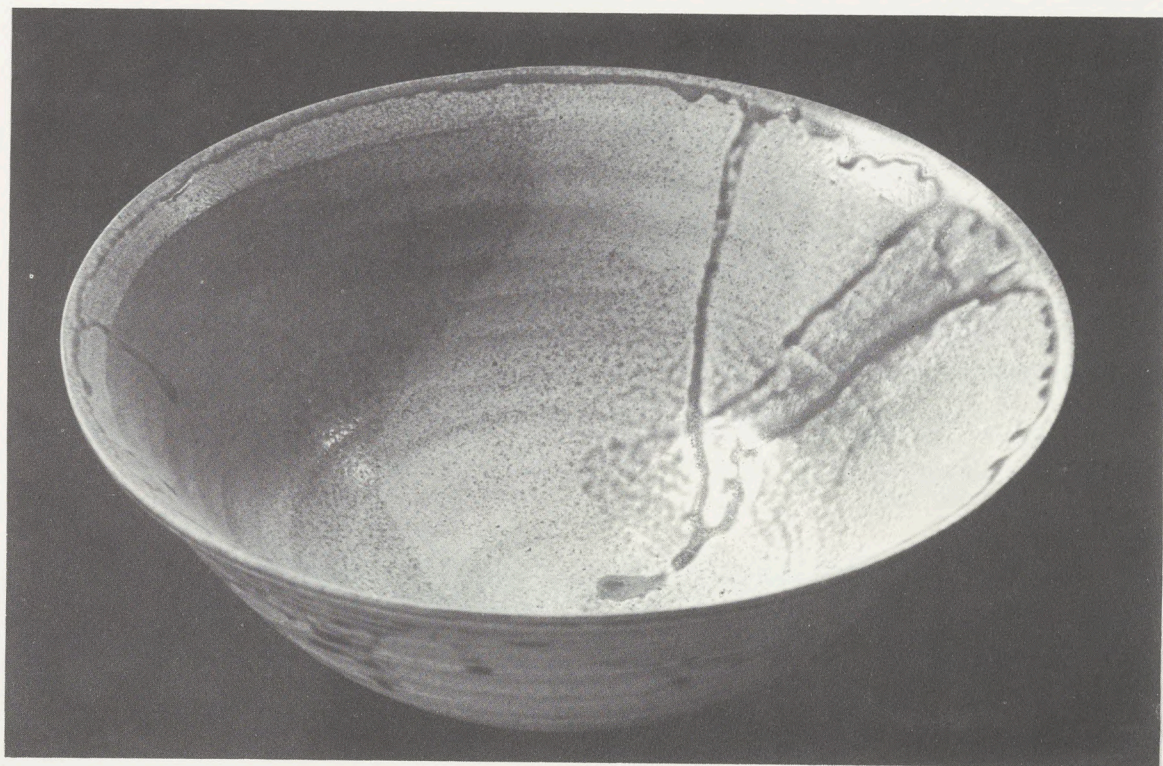
Jar, iron blue glaze, 8" height, 1967.



Plate, white slip and celadon glaze, 14" diameter, 1967.



Pots, iron glaze with wax decoration, white glaze, 14" diameter, 1958.



Bowl, ash glaze, 12" diameter, 1957.
Grand prize, Brussels World Fair, 1958.

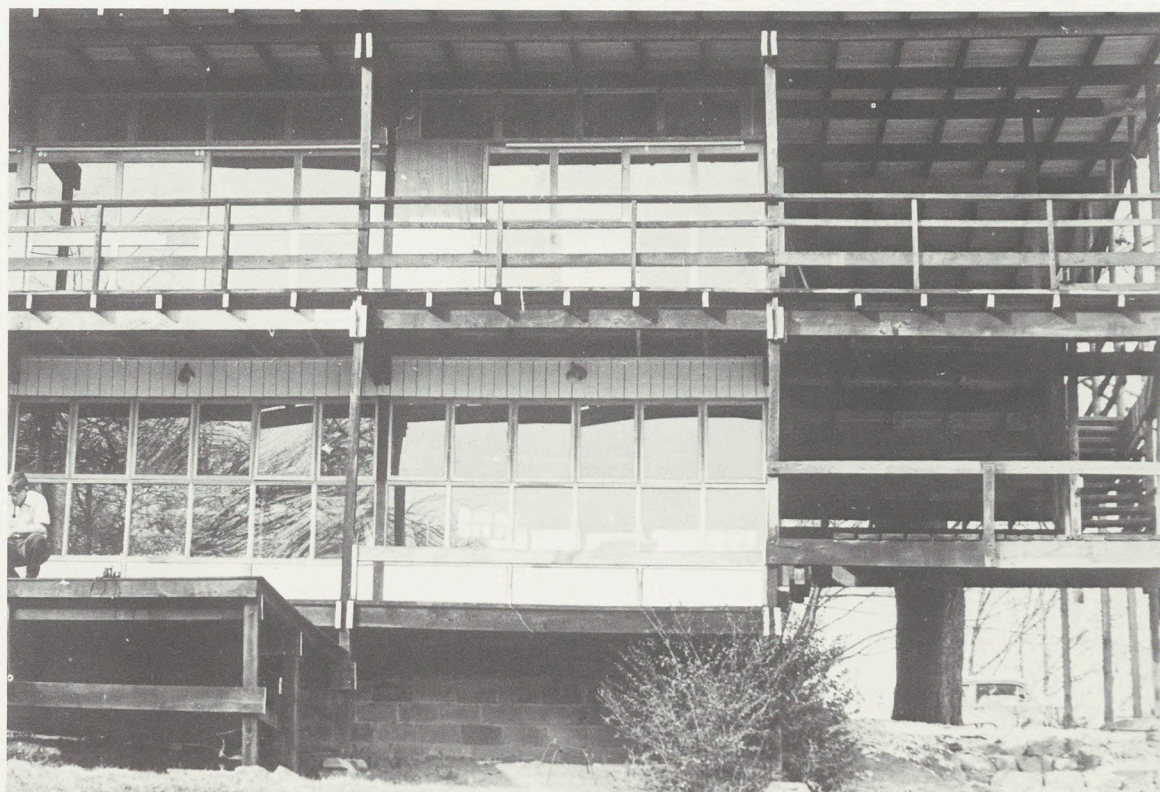
Chronology

- 1928 Born, May 26, Chiba, Japan.
- 1946-52 Studied at Tokyo Kyoiku University.
- 1952 Set up studio in Kyoto, the ceramic art center of Japan. After the war became involved with an avant-garde movement, The Sodeisha group, characterized by more free form in their ceramics and believers in "individual expression" as opposed to the potters of the Mingei or Folk Crafts who believed pottery should be anonymous and follow the folk forms of the past.

Also became involved with the modern craft movement organized through the Architecture and Craft group and an original planner of the craft center in Tokyo, Japan.
- 1953 Exhibited at the Invitational in Sao Paulo and one-man exhibitions in Tokyo and Kyoto.
- 1954 Exhibited at the Invitational in Rome.
- 1956 Exhibited at the Invitational in Kyoto and group and one-man exhibitions in Kyoto and Tokyo.
- 1957 Exhibited at the Invitational in Dusseldorf and group and one-man exhibitions in Kyoto and Tokyo.
- 1958 Came to the United States under the auspices of the Fine Arts Committee and the American Craftsman Council. Lectured and traveled over most of the United States and introduced Sodeisha shows while traveling. Helped to organize "Design Today: Japan" in the Contemporary Craft Museum.
- Exhibited at Invitationals in Tokyo and Brussels, and group and one-man exhibitions in Tokyo and Kyoto.
- 1959 One-man exhibitions at Mills College and Nippon Club, New York.
- 1960 Returned to Japan briefly early in the year. Worked with Design Technics as designer and engineer and researched kiln construction and ceramic material. Set up studio at Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania.

Group exhibition at Houston Museum and one-man exhibition at Emily Lowe Gallery, Miami.
- 1961 Exhibited at the Invitational, Smithsonian International and group shows at the Craft Museum, New York and Scripps College Invitational in Claremont, California.
- 1962 Group exhibitions at Scripps College, Claremont, California; University of Iowa, Iowa City; Design Technics, New York; and Lee Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia and a one-man exhibition at Design Technics, New York.
- 1963 Taught the summer of 1963 at The Haystack School in Deer Isle, Maine. Came to The Corcoran School of Art as a ceramics instructor and set up a studio in Warrenton, Virginia. Exhibited at the Invitational, Smithsonian International, and group exhibitions at Scripps College, Claremont, California; Lee Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia; Little Gallery, Philadelphia; and the Art Rental Service, The Corcoran Gallery of Art. One-man exhibitions held at Studio North, Baltimore and Lee Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia.

- 1964 1964 and 1965 traveled to the Far East, the Middle East and Europe for study purposes. Group exhibitions at the Lee Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia and the Philadelphia Art Alliance, Philadelphia.
- 1965 Designed and began construction of a new studio in Warrenton. Exhibited at the Invitational, Smithsonian International and group shows at the Lee Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia; The World of Washington Art, Beltsville, Maryland and the Arts and Crafts Center, Pittsburgh. One-man exhibition held at Lee Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia.
- 1966 Group exhibitions at Lee Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia and the Craft House, Washington, D. C. One-man exhibitions held at the Lee Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia.
- 1967 Group exhibitions at the Maryland Art Institute, Baltimore and Lee Gallery, Alexandria, Virginia. One-man exhibition held at Doxiadis Associates, Washington, D. C.



Hara's studio, Warrenton, Virginia.

